

Elections in Developed Democracies: Institutions, Parties, and Voters

Instructor:

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Course Objectives:

How are elections conducted in developed democracies? Which are the main actors that participate in the electoral process? What explains their behavior? These are some of the questions that will be explored in the course, which offers students an overview of the comparative literature on democratic elections. We will consider theoretical and empirical work, both classic and contemporary, with an emphasis on studies that innovate in their research design. The purpose of the course is to help students identify the general themes and open questions in the literature, and to generate new questions and hypotheses that they can explore further in their own research.

After an introductory session, the course will be divided in four blocks. First, we will review scholarly work about electoral institutions. How do they affect political outcomes? How are electoral rules chosen in the first place? How can we monitor their enforcement and what are the consequences of electoral malpractice?

Next, we will turn to the analysis of the “supply” side of the electoral market: political parties. What role do parties play in democratic politics? How do parties (and party systems) emerge and evolve? What explains their movements across the policy space? How can we measure what they stand for?

In the third block of the class, we will discuss how voters make their electoral choices. What contextual and individual variables make them turn out to vote? Once in the voting booth, how do they choose which party or candidate to pledge their support to? What role do ideology, partisanship, and the economic context play in this decision?

To conclude the course, we will also address three open debates in the literature: What is the best way to measure vote choice in multiparty elections? Under which conditions do voters re-elect corrupt incumbents? How is the emergence of social media transforming citizens’ political behavior?

Prerequisites:

The course assumes that the student is familiar – but not necessarily proficient – with standard multiple regression models and the fundamentals of game theory. This can be satisfied by successful completion of the first-year methods sequence at the NYU Politics Department.

Course Outline:

Week 1	.....	Introduction and Motivation
Week 2	.....	Electoral Systems and their Consequences
Week 3	.....	Electoral System Choice
Week 4	.....	Electoral Fraud
Week 5	.....	Parties and Party Systems
Week 6	.....	Party Competition
Week 7	.....	Estimating Policy Positions
Week 8	.....	Electoral Participation
Week 9	.....	Spatial Voting Models
Week 10	.....	Partisanship and Its Origins
Week 11	.....	The Economy and the Vote
Week 12	.....	Measuring Vote Choice
Week 13	.....	Punishing Corrupt Politicians?
Week 14	.....	Social Media and Elections

Requirements and Grading:

- *Class Participation (10%)*: all students are expected to attend the seminar each week and to have done all the required reading so that they can contribute actively to the class discussion. Articles and books listed as “recommended” are not required, unless the student is writing a response paper for the readings that week (see below).
- *Referee Reports (15%)*: each student will be required to write and present two (2) referee reports for individual papers. These referee reports should be 2-3 pages long, where the student provides a critical assessment of the contribution that the article or chapter makes to the existing literature, from both a substantive and methodological perspective. They will be submitted to the instructor at least 24 hours before the class, and defended in class in a short (5 to 10 minutes long) oral presentation. The papers to be refereed by each student will be assigned the first week of the course.
- *Response Papers (25%)*: each student will also be required to write two (2) response papers to the readings of two different sessions. In contrast with the referee reports, these papers should address all of the assigned articles and chapters that week. The student must show that he/she is able to identify the main themes or research questions in the readings, and how they fit with the broader literature on that topic. It is expected that he/she will not only do all the readings from the syllabus, but also possibly find additional research to discuss informally in class. As with the referee reports, it is expected that the student submits the paper no later than 24 hours before the class.
- *Term Paper (50%)*: each student is expected to submit a research paper (around 20 pages) no later than two weeks after the last session. This paper should advance his/her own scholarship on a relevant topic, and its quality should be equivalent to that of a draft conference paper. It must address a research question that is related to the content of the class, and should include a short review of existing work and some preliminary empirical analysis. The topic of the paper must be decided in consultation with the instructor.

Week 1. Introduction and Motivation.

Elections are the core element of representative democracy. This session will motivate the rest of the course by introducing the students to the positive theories of democracy. Following Manin et al. (1999), we will examine the two main roles of elections – expressing a political mandate and holding incumbents accountable –, and also discuss which institutional settings tend to improve the quality of representation and representatives (Powell, 2000; McDonald et al., 2004).

Manin, B., Przeworski, A., and Stokes, S. C. (1999). Elections and Representation. In Przeworski, A., Stokes, S. C., and Manin, B., editors, *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*, pages 29–54. Cambridge University Press

Powell, G. (2000). *Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. Yale University Press (Chapters 1, 3, and 4)

McDonald, M., Mendes, S., and Budge, I. (2004). What Are Elections For? Conferring the Median Mandate. *British Journal of Political Science*, 34(01):1–26

PART I. ELECTORAL INSTITUTIONS.

Week 2. Electoral Systems and Their Consequences.

There is a vast literature on the effects of electoral rules on many political and economic outcomes in democratic regimes. In this session we will review some of this empirical work. Despite having been published 60 years ago, Duverger’s (1954) essay on how electoral systems affect the number of parties remains highly influential. We will contrast his theory on the mechanical and psychological effects of electoral rules with the more recent work by Neto and Cox (1997), who introduce the number of cleavages as a modifying variable. We will also discuss how electoral institutions impact other political outcomes: intra-party competition (Carey and Shugart, 1995), income redistribution (Iversen and Soskice, 2006), and political corruption (Kunicova and Rose-Ackerman, 2005).

Duverger, M. (1954). *Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*. Wiley (Pages 206–229)

Neto, O. A. and Cox, G. (1997). Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties. *American Journal of Political Science*, pages 149–174

Carey, J. and Shugart, M. (1995). Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote: a Rank Ordering of Electoral Formulas. *Electoral studies*, 14:417–440

Iversen, T. and Soskice, D. (2006). Electoral Institutions and the Politics of Coalitions: Why Some Democracies Redistribute More than Others. *American Political Science Review*, 100(2):165–181

Kunicova, J. and Rose-Ackerman, S. (2005). Electoral Rules and Constitutional Structures as Constraints on Corruption. *British Journal of Political Science*, 35(4):573–606

Recommended:

- Cox, G. (1997). *Making Votes Count*. Cambridge University Press (Chapters 1, 4, 11, and 12.)
- Clark, W. and Golder, M. (2006). Rehabilitating Duverger's Theory. *Comparative Political Studies*, 39(6):679
- Monroe, B. and Rose, A. (2002). Electoral Systems and Unimagined Consequences: Partisan Effects of Districted Proportional Representation. *American Journal of Political Science*, pages 67–89
- Persson, T., Roland, G., and Tabellini, G. (2007). Electoral Rules and Government Spending in Parliamentary Democracies. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 2(2):155–188

Week 3. Electoral System Choice.

As any other political institution, electoral rules are endogenous. This set of readings will help us understand whether the problem of endogeneity affects the conclusions we reached in the previous week, and how it can be solved methodologically (Benoit, 2002). Our interest will also be substantive: we will contrast the work of Boix (1999) and Andrews and Jackman (2005) on how electoral rules are chosen, and discuss the trade-offs that are inherent in this decision (Carey and Hix, 2011).

- Benoit, K. (2002). The Endogeneity Problem in Electoral Studies: a Critical Re-examination of Duverger's Mechanical Effect. *Electoral Studies*, 21(1):35–46
- Boix, C. (1999). Setting the Rules of the Game: the Choice of Electoral Systems in Advanced Democracies. *American Political Science Review*, 93(3):609–624
- Andrews, J. and Jackman, R. (2005). Strategic Fools: Electoral Rule Choice Under Extreme Uncertainty. *Electoral Studies*, 24(1):65–84
- Carey, J. and Hix, S. (2011). The Electoral Sweet Spot: Low-Magnitude Proportional Electoral Systems. *American Journal of Political Science*

Recommended:

- Benoit, K. (2004). Models of Electoral System Change. *Electoral Studies*, 23(3):363–389
- Colomer, J. (2005). It's Parties that Choose Electoral Systems (or, Duverger's Laws Upside Down). *Political Studies*, 53(1):1–21
- Tavits, M. and Annus, T. (2006). Learning to Make Votes Count: The Role of Democratic Experience. *Electoral Studies*, 25(1):72–90

Week 4. Electoral Fraud.

Elections in democratic countries are not always free and fair. We will read chapters from Birch (2011) to understand how and when incumbents engage in electoral malpractice. Myagkov et al. (2009) and Cantú and Saiegh (2011) represent two examples of a growing literature on the forensics

of electoral fraud – we will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the methods they propose to detect electoral irregularities. Finally, reading Tucker (2007) will help us theorize about the consequences of electoral fraud in new democracies.

Birch, S. (2011). *Electoral Malpractice*. Oxford University Press (Chapters 4 and 5, also skim Chapter 3)

Myagkov, M., Ordeshook, P., and Shakin, D. (2009). *The Forensics of Election Fraud: Russia and Ukraine*, volume 100. Cambridge University Press Cambridge & New York (Chapters 1 and 2)

Cantú, F. and Saiegh, S. (2011). Fraudulent Democracy? An Analysis of Argentina's Infamous Decade Using Supervised Machine Learning. *Political Analysis*, 19(4):409–433

Tucker, J. (2007). Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions. *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3):535

Recommended:

Beber, B. and Scacco, A. (2012). What the Numbers Say: A Digit-Based Test for Election Fraud. *Political Analysis*, 20(2):211–234

Little, A. (2012). Elections, Fraud, and Election Monitoring in the Shadow of Revolution. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 7(3):249–283

PART II. POLITICAL PARTIES.

Week 5. Parties and Party Systems

This set of readings offers an overview of the (extensive) literature on parties and party systems. Some of the broad questions we will discuss are: Why are parties necessary, what functions do they play in representative democracies, and how are these functions changing? What types of parties exist and how can they be classified? What are the main existing theories that explain how parties and party systems emerge and change?

Aldrich, J. (1995). *Why Parties?: The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*. University of Chicago Press (Chapters 2–4)

Boix, C. (2007). The Emergence of Parties and Party Systems. In Boix, C. and Stokes, S., editors, *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, pages 314–34. Oxford University Press

Katz, R. and Mair, P. (2009). The Cartel Party Thesis: A Restatement. *Perspectives on Politics*, 7(4):753

Dalton, R., Wattenberg, M., et al. (2000). *Parties without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford University Press Oxford (Chapters 5 and 6)

Recommended:

- Hug, S. (2001). *Altering Party Systems: Strategic Behavior and the Emergence of New Political Parties in Western Democracies*. University of Michigan Press (Chapter 5)
- Strøm, K. and Müller, W. (1999). Political Parties and Hard Choices. In Müller, W. and Strøm, K., editors, *Policy, Office, or Votes?: How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*, page 1. Cambridge University Press

Week 6. Party Competition.

How do parties decide their policy positions? This question has generated a vast formal literature on party competition. This week we will review some of this work. We will learn about the spatial and the behavioral model of party competition, and whether it is possible to combine insights from both Adams et al. (2005). We will confront the theoretical expectations derived from these models with empirical evidence, and discuss how some of their assumptions about parties' behavior can be relaxed if we use agent-based modelling (Laver and Sergenti, 2011). The debate on whether parties are policy- or vote-seeking will continue with a discussion of the classic essay by Przeworski and Sprague (1986) and the more recent comparative study by Tavits (2007).

- Adams, J., Merrill, S., and Grofman, B. (2005). *A Unified Theory of Party Competition: A Cross-National Analysis Integrating Spatial and Behavioral Factors*. Cambridge Univ Pr (Chapters 1–4 and 13)
- Laver, M. and Sergenti, E. (2011). *Party Competition: An Agent-Based Model*. Princeton University Press (Chapters 1–3, 5, and 6)
- Przeworski, A. and Sprague, J. (1986). *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism*. University of Chicago Press
- Tavits, M. (2007). Principle vs. Pragmatism: Policy Shifts and Political Competition. *American Journal of Political Science*, 51(1):151–165

Recommended:

- Stokes, D. (1963). Spatial Models of Party Competition. *The American Political Science Review*, 57(2):368–377
- Strom, K. (1990). A Behavioral Theory of Competitive Political Parties. *American Journal of Political Science*, pages 565–598

Week 7. Estimating Policy Positions.

Measuring parties' policy positions is a relevant, yet complex, scientific endeavor. This week we will review four different approaches in the literature: expert surveys (Benoit and Laver, 2006), coding of party manifestos by hand (Gabel and Huber, 2000), item-response models based on roll call votes (Clinton et al., 2004), and computer-assisted coding of political texts (Grimmer and Stewart, 2013). We will discuss the trade-offs inherent in each method, in terms of reliability, validity, cost, and convenience; and also questions that are transversal to all of them: How many policy dimensions are relevant? Should we weigh policy positions by the salience or importance that each actor attributes to each dimension? Is it possible to compare policy positions of different types of actors, across countries, and over time?

- Benoit, K. and Laver, M. (2006). *Party Policy in Modern Democracies*. Routledge (Chapters 4 and 5)
- Gabel, M. and Huber, J. (2000). Putting Parties in their Place: Inferring Party Left-Right Ideological Positions from Party Manifestos Data. *American Journal of Political Science*, pages 94–103
- Clinton, J., Jackman, S., and Rivers, D. (2004). The Statistical Analysis of Roll Call Data. *American Political Science Review*, 98(2):355–370
- Grimmer, J. and Stewart, B. (2013). Text as Data: The Promise and Pitfalls of Automatic Content Analysis Methods for Political Texts. *Political Analysis*

Recommended:

- Shor, B., Berry, C., and McCarty, N. (2010). A Bridge to Somewhere: Mapping State and Congressional Ideology on a Cross-institutional Common Space. *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 35(3):417–448
- Beauchamp, N. (2011). Using Text to Scale Legislatures with Uninformative Voting. Unpublished manuscript, New York University
- Proksch, S. and Slapin, J. (2010). Position Taking in European Parliament Speeches. *British Journal of Political Science*, 40(03):587–611

PART III. VOTERS.

Week 8. Electoral Participation.

If voting is costly, and the likelihood of affecting the outcome of the election is close to zero, why do people turn out to vote? And why some of them always do, but others don't? What explains longitudinal and cross-sectional variation in turnout rates? These are some of the questions we will address this week. We will start with an overview of the comparative literature on the individual (Franklin, 2004) and contextual (Blais, 2006) determinants of electoral participation, and then turn to discuss two articles that illustrate new methodological and substantive approaches to the study of turnout. Gerber and Green (2000) is an example of the increasing body of experimental research in Political Science. In a provocative study, Fowler et al. (2008) argue that turnout can be attributed to genetic effects.

- Franklin, M. (2004). *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945*. Cambridge University Press (Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, and 6)
- Blais, A. (2006). What Affects Voter Turnout? *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9:111–125
- Gerber, A. and Green, D. (2000). The Effects of Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A field Experiment. *American Political Science Review*, 94(3):653–663
- Fowler, J., Baker, L., and Dawes, C. (2008). Genetic Variation in Political Participation. *American Political Science Review*, 102(02):233–248

Recommended:

- Lassen, D. (2005). The Effect of Information on Voter Turnout: Evidence From a Natural Experiment. *American Journal of Political Science*, 49(1):103–118
- Ansolabehere, S. and Hersch, E. (2012). Validation: What Big Data Reveal About Survey Misreporting and the Real Electorate. *Political Analysis*

Week 9. Spatial Voting Models.

The discussion this week will build up on the earlier discussion on party competition, but our focus will now be voters. We will review different spatial voting models – proximity voting and directional voting, with and without discounting –, but our main focus will be on empirical work that aims at testing their empirical implications (Tomz and Van Houweling, 2008) in multiparty elections (Kedar, 2005). We will also discuss how predictions from spatial models perform better among informed voters (Jessee, 2009) and when the electorate is homogeneous (Gerber and Lewis, 2004).

- Tomz, M. and Van Houweling, R. (2008). Candidate Positioning and Voter Choice. *American Political Science Review*, 102(3):303–318
- Kedar, O. (2005). When Moderate Voters Prefer Extreme Parties: Policy Balancing in Parliamentary Elections. *American Political Science Review*, 99(2):185–199
- Jessee, S. (2009). Spatial Voting in the 2004 Presidential Election. *American Political Science Review*, 103(1):59–81
- Gerber, E. and Lewis, J. (2004). Beyond the Median: Voter Preferences, District Heterogeneity, and Political Representation. *Journal of Political Economy*, 112(6):1364–1383

Recommended:

- Enelow, J. and Hinich, M. (1984). *The Spatial Theory of Voting: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press (Chapters 1–3 and 7)

Week 10. Partisanship and Its Origins.

Party identification is the single best predictor of vote choice. But how do citizens develop their attachment to a party? What mechanisms explain the strength of this relationship? What institutional and individual factors shape partisanship? What is the causal direction of the relationship between party identification and vote choice? We will “revisit” the early work from the Michigan School (Lewis-Beck et al., 2008) to examine whether their theory and findings are still valid today. Reading Dinas (2013) will help us guide the debate on the different approaches to how party identification forms – whether it is due to political socialization or to exposure to political events. This discussion will be also be informed by the insights of Huber et al. (2005) on how the salience of group identities increases partisanship. The importance of party identification will also be illustrated with the study by Bartels (2002), which shows how it shapes citizens’ perceptions of all kinds of political events.

- Lewis-Beck, M., Norpoth, H., Jacoby, W., and Weisberg, H. (2008). *The American Voter Revisited*. University of Michigan Press (Chapters 6 and 7)
- Dinas, E. (2013). Why Does the Apple Fall far from the Tree? How Early Political Socialisation Prompts Parent-Child Partisan Dissimilarity. Forthcoming in the *British Journal of Political Science*
- Huber, J., Kernell, G., and Leoni, E. (2005). Institutional Context, Cognitive Resources and Party Attachments across Democracies. *Political Analysis*, 13(4):365–386
- Bartels, L. (2002). Beyond the Running Tally: Partisan Bias in Political Perceptions. *Political Behavior*, 24(2):117–150

Recommended:

- Converse, P. (1969). Of Time and Partisan Stability. *Comparative Political Studies*, 2(2):139–171
- Shively, W. (1979). The Development of Party Identification Among Adults: Exploration of a Functional Model. *The American political science review*, pages 1039–1054
- Fiorina, M. (1981). Retrospective Voting in American National Elections (Chapters 4 and 5)
- Brader, T., Tucker, J., and Duell, D. (2012). Which Parties can Lead Opinion? Experimental Evidence on Partisan Cue Taking in Multiparty Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies*
- Green, D., Palmquist, B., and Schickler, E. (2004). *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters*. Yale University Press

Week 11. The Economy and the Vote.

There is ample empirical evidence that economic conditions affect incumbents' electoral performance. But what exactly about the economy affects voters' choice? Is it their personal economic situation or the (perceived) state of the economy at the macro level? This week we will discuss the theoretical and methodological nuances of these questions. We will start with one of the classics in the literature (Hibbs and Hibbs, 1989) and then turn to recent work on the issue of egotropic vs. sociotropic economic voting (Ansolabehere et al., 2011), the heterogeneity in the perceptions of the economy (Duch et al., 2000), and how individual-, party-, and country- level variables affect the extent to which voters respond to economic conditions (Van der Brug et al., 2007).

- Hibbs, D. and Hibbs, D. (1989). *The American Political Economy: Macroeconomics and Electoral Politics*. Harvard University Press (Chapters 4 and 5)
- Ansolabehere, S., Meredith, M., and Snowberg, E. (2011). Macro-Economic Voting: Local Information and Micro-Perceptions of the Macro-Economy. Unpublished manuscript
- Duch, R., Palmer, H., and Anderson, C. (2000). Heterogeneity in Perceptions of National Economic Conditions. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44(4):635–652
- Van der Brug, W., Van der Eijk, C., and Franklin, M. (2007). *The Economy and the Vote: Economic Conditions and Elections in Fifteen Countries*. Cambridge University Press (Chapters 4–6, skim chapter 2)

Recommended:

- Tucker, J. (2006). *Regional Economic Voting: Russia, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, 1990-99*. Cambridge University Press (Chapters 1, 2, 8, 9)
- Gelman, A., Shor, B., Bafumi, J., and Park, D. (2007). Rich State, Poor State, Red State, Blue State: What's the Matter with Connecticut. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 2(4):345–367

PART IV. TOPICS ON ELECTORAL BEHAVIOR.

Week 12. Measuring Vote Choice.

Up to this point in the course, we have focused on independent variables that affect voting behavior. The set of readings for this week focuses on how we can actually measure vote choice. This issue is not trivial in multi-party elections, and generates all kinds of methodological questions. We will focus on three of these: How can we estimate the effect of individual- and party-level variables on voting behavior when there are multiple parties competing in the election? (Alvarez and Nagler, 1998) When examining the magnitude of these effects, should we use vote choice as a categorical outcome or try to measure the underlying utilities that voters receive from voting for each party? (Van der Eijk et al., 2006) What type of model should we employ to examine electoral behavior using district-level data? (Tomz et al., 2002; Lewis, 2004)

- Alvarez, R. and Nagler, J. (1998). When Politics and Models Collide: Estimating Models of Multiparty Elections. *American Journal of Political Science*, pages 55–96
- Van der Eijk, C., Van der Brug, W., Kroh, M., and Franklin, M. (2006). Rethinking the Dependent Variable in Voting Behavior: On the Measurement and Analysis of Electoral Utilities. *Electoral Studies*, 25(3):424–447
- Tomz, M., Tucker, J., and Wittenberg, J. (2002). An Easy and Accurate Regression Model for Multiparty Electoral Data. *Political Analysis*, 10(1):66–83
- Lewis, J. (2004). Extending King's Ecological Inference Model to Multiple Elections Using Markov Chain Monte Carlo. In King, G., Rosen, O., and Tanner, M. A., editors, *Ecological Inference: New Methodological Strategies*. Cambridge University Press

Week 13. Punishing Corrupt Politicians?

Elections are supposed to allow voters to “throw the rascals out”. However, most comparative literature shows that corrupt incumbents are rarely punished by the electorate and often get reelected (Golden, 2006; Jiménez and Cainzos, 2006). This is the puzzle that will be discussed this week. We will start with an overview of the literature on the electoral consequences of corruption, and then turn to three empirical studies that explore different mechanisms to explain why voters might exonerate corrupt politicians. We will assess the value of having a more informed electorate (Ferraz and Finan, 2008) and how a free and vigilant press can facilitate electoral accountability (Chang et al., 2010), and whether it is personal experiences with corruption or perceptions of societal corruption that affects voting behavior (Klašnja et al., 2012).

- Golden, M. (2006). Some Puzzles of Political Corruption in Modern Advanced Democracies. Unpublished manuscript
- Jiménez, F. and Cainzos, M. (2006). How Far and Why Do Corruption Scandals Cost Votes? In J., G. and Newell, J., editors, *Scandals in past and contemporary politics*. Manchester University Press
- Ferraz, C. and Finan, F. (2008). Exposing Corrupt Politicians: The Effects of Brazil's Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 123(2):703–745
- Chang, E., Golden, M., and Hill, S. (2010). Legislative Malfeasance and Political Accountability. *World Politics*, 62(02):177–220
- Klašnja, M., Tucker, J., and Deegan-Krause, K. (2012). Pocketbook vs. Sociotropic Corruption Voting. Unpublished manuscript, New York University

Recommended:

- Rundquist, B., Strom, G., and Peters, J. (1977). Corrupt Politicians and their Electoral Support: Some Experimental Observations. *The American Political Science Review*, 71(3):954–963
- Kurer, O. (2001). Why Do Voters Support Corrupt Politicians? In A.K., J., editor, *The Political Economy of Corruption*. Routledge
- Jacobson, G. and Dimock, M. (1994). Checking Out: The Effects of Bank Overdrafts on the 1992 House Elections. *American Journal of Political Science*, 38(3):601–624

Week 14. Social Media and Elections.

The course will conclude with a general debate about the new research questions that the increasing use of social media sites is generating, and the old theories and hypotheses that can now be tested by observing citizens' behavior on these platforms. After a general overview of this emerging field (Farrell, 2012), we will focus on two specific questions: How does political participation spread through online social networks? (Bond et al., 2012; González-Bailón et al., 2011) Can we use social media data to predict offline events? (Gayo-Avello, 2012)

- Farrell, H. (2012). The Internet's Consequences for Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, forthcoming
- Bond, R., Fariss, C., Jones, J., Kramer, A., Marlow, C., Settle, J., and Fowler, J. (2012). A 61-Million-Person Experiment in Social Influence and Political Mobilization. *Nature*, 489(7415):295–298
- González-Bailón, S., Borge-Holthoefer, J., Rivero, A., and Moreno, Y. (2011). The Dynamics of Protest Recruitment through an Online Network. *Nature. Scientific reports*
- Gayo-Avello, D. (2012). I Wanted to Predict Elections with Twitter and all I got was this Lousy Paper A Balanced Survey on Election Prediction using Twitter Data. Unpublished manuscript

Recommended:

- Adamic, L. and Glance, N. (2005). The Political Blogosphere and the 2004 US Election: Divided They Blog. In *Proceedings of the 3rd international workshop on Link discovery*, pages 36–43. ACM
- Ryan, T. (2012). What Makes Us Click? Demonstrating Incentives for Angry Discourse with Digital-Age Field Experiments. *The Journal of Politics*, 74(4):1138–1152
- Hamilton, A. and Tolbert, C. J. (2012). Political Engagement and the Internet in the 2008 U.S. Presidential Elections. In Anduiza, E., Jensen, M., and Jorba, L., editors, *Digital Media and Political Engagement Worldwide: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge University Press
- Stephens-Davidowitz, S. (2011). The Effects of Racial Animus on Voting: Evidence Using Google Search Data. Unpublished manuscript